

REMARKS

Applicants would like to thank the Examiner for the interview granted March 21, 2005, to discuss the distribution of species in the present application.

Applicants have provisionally elected species N (FIGS. 18-22), and Claim 41. However, it is believed that other species should be grouped with the embodiment shown in FIGS. 18-22. In particular, (FIGS. 18, 19) the hollow projections, (bubbles) 1008, 1010 and 1012 are formed by providing weakened areas in a flexible shield part of the device. FIGS. 20, 21 and 22 show a thinner or weakened area in the flexible shield part as well, 1008, 1010 and 1012. The device of FIG. 11 (species G) also includes an area of thinned flexible material adjacent area 457 which functions like that in the device shown in FIGS. 18-22. Accordingly, it is believed that the device shown in FIG. 11 should be grouped with the presently elected species.

The device shown in FIGS. 23-25 are all grouped in species O, and show a mixture of solid and hollow projections, which function like the hollow projections shown in FIG. 18, (species N) for example. Accordingly, it is believed that the device shown in FIGS. 23-25 should be grouped with the presently elected species.

The device shown in FIGS. 26 and 27 (species P) include areas of weakened material which are annular and interrupted annular in shape. The device of FIG. 26 is strikingly similar to that shown in FIGS. 20 and 22 (species N), which both have annular areas of weakened material. Accordingly, it is believed that the devices shown in FIGS. 26 and 27 should be grouped with the presently elected species.

The device shown in FIG. 28 (species Q) includes areas of weakened material which are interrupted annular in shape which are like that shown in FIG. 21, for

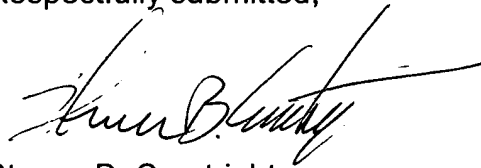
example (species N) and like that shown in FIG. 27. Accordingly, it is believed that the device shown in FIG. 28 should be grouped with the presently elected species.

Finally, it is believed that new Claim 41 claims the variants of the invention shown in the groups shown in groups N, G, O, P and Q. Applicant respectfully requests that the variants of the invention shown in groups N, G, O, P and Q be considered together.

If there are any remaining issues or if the Examiner wishes to resolve a difference of opinion directed to Applicant's grouping of species, she is encouraged to contact the undersigned by telephone.

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Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Steven B. Courtright", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

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